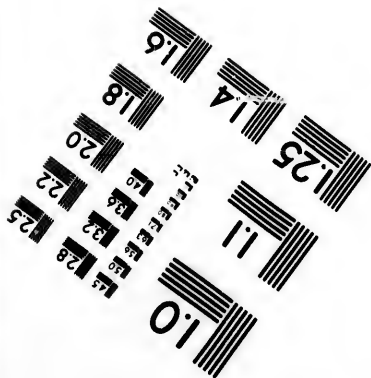
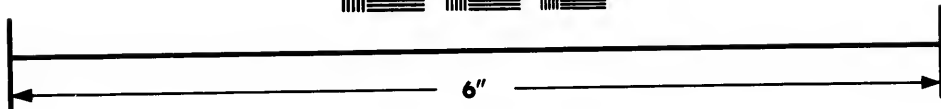
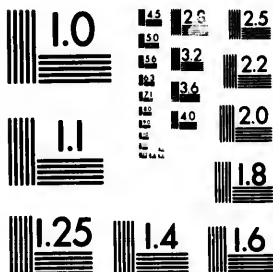


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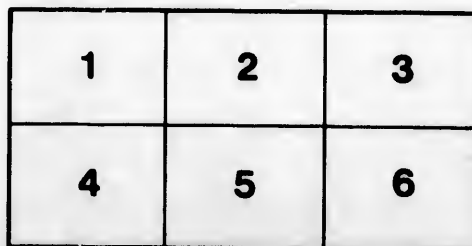
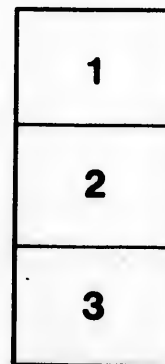
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SPEECH

OF

MR. GROVER, OF NEW YORK,

ON

THE OREGON QUESTION.

DELIVERED

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, MONDAY, JANUARY 26, 1846.

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THE OREGON QUESTION.

The resolution from the Committee on Foreign Affairs, requiring the President to notify Great Britain of the intention of the United States to terminate the joint occupancy of Oregon, and to abrogate the convention of 1827, being under consideration in Committee of the Whole—

Mr. GROVER, who was entitled to the floor, rose and said:

Mr. CHAIRMAN: At the commencement of this debate I did not design to take any part in it, for I was aware that, in comparison with many gentlemen on this floor, I possessed but a limited knowledge of the subject of our title to Oregon. I deemed it a course more becoming in me to listen to those who had more thoroughly investigated the subject, and were better acquainted with its bearings, than to trespass upon the time of the committee myself. I did not change that intention until I observed, from the various conflicting views presented by gentlemen in the progress of the discussion, that my own might be misunderstood by my constituents and by the House, should I not give a brief exposition of them. I have been highly gratified with much that has occurred during the progress of the debate, while I have not been able to hear other portions without poignant regret. I regard the pending question before the House as one of the greatest importance—a question upon which, it has been said, the momentous interests of peace and war are suspended. I rejoice to say that, in its discussion, as yet, no distinctive party lines have been drawn; on the contrary, several gentlemen, whose political tenets are opposed to my own, have most ably and eloquently advocated the policy of giving the notice to Great Britain terminating the joint occupancy in Oregon. And, on the other hand, some gentlemen agreeing politically with me, have, with equal ability and earnestness, opposed it. This was as it ever should be. Mere questions of party politics ought not to mingle with the foreign relations of the country. However much we might differ with each other upon questions of domestic policy, and however bitter our strifes might become, we should always in our transactions with other nations, regard ourselves as one people—having a common interest, embarked in the same bottom, and destined to experience a common fate. There was one thing which I cannot but deeply regret, and that is, the appearances of a somewhat local and sectional division. I still more deeply deplore the allusion made by the gentleman from South Carolina, [Mr. RHETT,] “to rumors, that the course of some gentlemen was influenced by other than patriotic mo-

tives; that the gentlemen from the West were mingling up with this question schemes and hopes in regard to the next Presidential canvass; and that the delegation from New York were moved by indignation growing out of events connected with the late canvass.” New York indignant! Why should she be, sir? I will take the liberty to tell gentlemen here, and the country at large, that New York entertains no such feelings. No, far from it; pleased with the present, gratified with the past, New York, with confidence, leaves the future in the hands of those to whom it belongs—the people of the nation. I know she never can descend to act from so base a motive. The people of New York know of no reason why they should be displeased with the existing state of our political affairs.

The gentleman from Virginia, [Mr. PENDLETON,] who had addressed the House this morning, alluded to the Baltimore Convention, and to what he deemed the very strange results that had there transpired. The delegates of a great and powerful political party assembled at that place—a party which, with very brief exceptions, have, since the commencement of the nineteenth century, controlled the destinies of this nation. These delegates were charged with the duty of selecting candidates to be supported by the party for the highest offices in the nation in the then approaching contest. It is true, that, when thus assembled, there were urged, by their respective friends, with great zeal and earnestness, the claims of their particular favorites, and a somewhat vehement discussion, occupying several days, ensued, closing with the unanimous nomination of the present incumbent of the Executive chair. This seems passing strange to that gentleman; but his astonishment at a result like this will be somewhat abated by a better knowledge of the real nature and true character of that great and patriotic party there represented. With the Democracy of the country, men are a secondary consideration; they regarded their principles of vastly greater importance. Principles before men, ever have been, and I hope ever will be, their motto. Finding these inscribed upon their banners, they regard as of little moment who are the candidates, provided they be “honest, faithful, and capable.” It is, indeed, true that New York was deeply disappointed in the result. That name which she had long desired to see selected as the choice of that convention was passed by. The news came upon her with stunning effect. The inquiry passed from men to man, What causes can have effected this? She searched for the cause, and found that it was the

inclinations of the common enemy. They had availed themselves of the same agency employed of old to induce Ahab to go up to Ramoth Gilead to battle. Far and wide had they insidiously whispered that he could not be elected, and in some quarters had produced that belief. We held them responsible; and ere the ides of November paid the debt, New York was fully satisfied with the principles promulgated by that convention, and with the man of its choice; and being thus assured that her principles were safe, she soon shook off the momentary pang of disappointment, and neither expressed nor felt any dissatisfaction at the result. Such, I trust, will ever be her course. It is magnanimous and wise; and I hope that so good an example will be followed by every friend of Democratic principles throughout the entire country. Let but this spirit prevail, and the exultation of the gentleman at the slight differences of opinion exhibited here will be, as it ever has been with him and his political friends, short-lived indeed. Let him not lay the flattering unction to his soul, that from any causes now operating, or likely to operate, the party is doomed. With these preliminary remarks, I will now address myself to the question immediately before the House, and will state, as briefly as possible, my views thereon.

I have already stated that, at the outset of the debate, I knew, comparatively, little of the points involved. I had not, at that time, carefully examined our title to the territory. I knew, indeed, that in 1790 Great Britain and Spain had mutually agreed that each should jointly enjoy the rights of trafficking with the Indians throughout that country; or, rather, that Spain had permitted England to exercise jointly with her those rights. To this transaction the United States were not parties—they had nothing to do with it. Their claims could not be affected by that arrangement. I knew, further, that in 1818, and while Great Britain now claims that the above arrangement with Spain was in full force, a convention had been entered into between Great Britain and the United States, by the provisions of which England had agreed that we should have a joint occupancy with her of the whole of Oregon; or, at least, as some insist, a liberty to navigate its rivers, creeks, and harbors, and to trade with the Indian tribes; in all these respects placing us on an equal footing with herself, and agreeing that the question of title, in the meanwhile, should remain in abeyance. I further knew that, in 1819, we acquired all the rights of Spain to the territory by virtue of the Florida treaty. Now, if we had, as conceded by England in 1818, an equal right with herself to the territory, and Spain, as she insisted, also possessing at that time an equal right, it seems to me clear that when we had acquired the rights of Spain by purchase, we then possessed, at least, a right in title to *two-thirds* of the territory—our own and Spain's. So much I knew; but I had never looked into the "journals of old voyages of discovery, nor turned over those musty records," of which the gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. WINTHROP] had spoken with such slight respect. But when, subsequently, I examined the official correspondence between our negotiators and the British envoy, my former opinion had been changed, and now, instead of thinking we had only two-thirds of the title, I have become convinced

that we are entitled to the *whole*, and that Great Britain has no right to the territory at all, but only a "tenant at will." I therefore was not surprised that the gentleman from Virginia [Mr. PENDLETON] should express his regret at the publication of the correspondence, and should speak of it as an Executive indiscretion. Did I entertain the views of that gentleman, I, too, would certainly regret it. "If Oregon is not worth a farthing—if it requires the genius of a Shakspeare to paint its horrors," I should regret that the people have had such a document submitted to their examination; from the perusal of which, I doubt not, they will become satisfied that their title is good up to 54° 40'.

I am at a loss how to understand that gentleman. In one part of his argument, he insists that the territory is utterly worthless; in another part that it is situated at too great a distance ever to become a part of our confederacy; and in still another part, he objects to giving the notice, for the reason that he thinks by so doing we should not be able to obtain the whole of it. Of one thing that gentleman may be assured, that although he may regard it indiscreet in the Executive to publish the correspondence, the people will not. They never will forgive one of their agents for withholding from them information as to their title to any portion of their territory. They regard it as affecting their rights, and will insist upon their public servants giving them the earliest and fullest information concerning them. But if after the perusal of these documents I could still entertain any doubt as to our right, they would be effectually removed by what has fallen from the gentleman from Massachusetts, [Mr. WINTHROP.] That gentleman brought to the examination of this question the energies of his gigantic mind and all the treasures of his legal learning; and after a thorough investigation of the whole question, told the committee our title to the whole territory was the *best* of the two. This is enough for me. Can there, I ask, be *two* good titles to the same territory held by two different nations at the same time? If two claimants hold titles to the same farm, can one of them be good as against the other, and yet the other better? It is an absurdity. A claim must be either good or good for nothing.

With one or two exceptions, no one who has engaged in this debate has expressed a shade of doubt as to our title. A colleague of my own [Mr. GOODYEAR] said that Great Britain had rights in Oregon. No doubt of it; but what are they? The right of trading with the Indians—a right she extorted from Spain in 1790; and the same right was assented to by us by the convention of 1818 renewed in 1827. These are her rights, and all the rights she has there. Now, under these circumstances, what does the President recommend? To give the notice provided for by the latter convention, terminating the joint occupancy after the expiration of twelve months. This will strip her of the right she now holds; and, if she continues in the possession of the territory, will convert her into a trespasser. She is now a "tenant at will." After notice to quit, she will be a trespasser—neither more nor less. But the honorable gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. WINTHROP] told the committee there was no need whatever of settling this question now; that it may remain in its

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present position just as well as not for fifty years to come. Is it so? Can any attentive observer of the progress of our people in subduing and settling this continent—any man who reflects upon what actually has happened within the last fifty years—the quadrupling of our population, and the vast amount of territory settled—possibly suppose that the question of title may still remain in abeyance for fifty years to come? Is it a legitimate mode of reasoning to urge, because we have got along peaceably since 1818, that we can still continue to do so? Is it not within the last year or two only that our people have commenced any considerable settlements in the territory? Does not every one see that long before the lapse of fifty years, the settlements by our citizens, as well as those of Great Britain, will have increased to such an extent as to render a joint occupancy impossible? A short retrospect of our national progress must, surely, convince any man that further delay of a question like this will be dangerous—that, instead of making the final settlement easier, it will but complicate its difficulties.

Another view of the subject has been presented to our consideration, denominated at first “masterly inactivity,” but recently “masterly activity.” Those who advocate this plan, though opposed to giving the notice, have unitedly expressed their opinion that our title to the whole territory is clear and indisputable, together with a strong desire eventually to obtain the whole. Let us briefly examine their system of measures. They propose to get the country peopled with American citizens. How? By inducing our people to go there and settle. What prospects do they present to induce them to do this? When they are inquired of, “Have you any title to the country?” the reply must be, no, not yet, only the right of joint occupancy; when that terminates, it is, as yet, uncertain whether you must apply for a title to your farms to us, or to Great Britain. Will men be very likely to go under such an inducement? Is this sufficient to tempt our people to seek homes for themselves and their posterity in a wilderness? Gentlemen may say, “We will grant them lands.” But, can we do this? Have we not, by the convention, given to Great Britain the enjoyment of certain rights in the entire territory? While that remains in force will she not complain, and justly, too, if we take any steps tending to abridge those rights? But suppose we overcome this obstacle: cannot Great Britain present to her settlers the same, if not greater inducements? May she not also make grants of land in the territory? Clearly so; and when we give thousands to our people, will she not give millions to hers? When this scheme has been operating for a few years, how then will stand the question? Can either Great Britain or ourselves, with honor, negotiate away the territory to which titles have been granted? Clearly not. Each will be bound to defend their own grants at all hazards. They must do it. Have gentlemen duly considered this? If they have, they surely will abandon all hopes arising from the idea that we can safely let this question remain in *statu quo* for fifty years, or for any considerable period of time.

The gentleman from Alabama [Mr. YANCEY] has advised us to wait until we have twenty thousand rifles there, and men to use them, and suf-

ficient provisions to support an army. Are we, then, to say to emigrants: True, we can give you no title, but never you mind; take your axes and rifles; go on; get into the territory; work away; clear up the country until you can raise provisions enough to maintain an army; and when you get strong enough in arms and numbers to drive off the British, and us, too, then our kind, paternal Government will interfere; then we will assert our title to the whole territory, send our army there to protect you, and eat up the provisions you have raised for our troops; then we will dot your country over with our land offices, peddle out to you the soil you have reclaimed from the savages, and put the money into our treasury! Is not this, after all, pretty much the amount of the argument?—Wait until you can sustain yourselves; then let us in, and we will open for ourselves, and for you, all those fine avenues for the commerce of the world that have figured so largely in this debate. “But how are we to be governed in the mean while?” the emigrant will inquire. Gentlemen may answer: Rest perfectly easy on that score; you shall be governed to your heart’s content; you, in this respect, shall be doubly blessed; Great Britain has extended her laws over the territory, and we will ours! You shall enjoy the blessings of two Governments; two sets of officers throughout; two independent judiciaries; two sets of executive and ministerial officers, amenable to different Powers, administering different systems of law! How will this operate? Suppose a controversy arises between an American and British settler. Each will run to the tribunal of his own country, procure process, and start with the marshal in hot pursuit of his antagonist, meeting perhaps midway. What now ensues? Who, at all acquainted with the disposition of the American people, will expect that they will quietly surrender to the British authority? Who, knowing the nature of John Bull, expects him to surrender, and suffer himself to be marched up quietly to the American tribunal? I presume none. What, then, will be the consequence? A fight ensues. The countrymen of the respective parties rush in, and participate in the contest; the intelligence spreads; each party exasperated against the other, and entertaining feelings of the deepest hostility, war among them, in its most horrid form, becomes inevitable. True, peace may exist in Boston and Charleston. The citizens of these commercial marts may pursue their traffic undisturbed—their ships, their homes, and their families may be safe. But can this be called an honorable peace? Coax our citizens to Oregon for the purpose of securing our title to the country, involve them in war, and then, for the purpose of preserving peace for ourselves, abandon them to their fate! The American people will never do this; no, never. I assure gentlemen that all hopes of preserving peace in this way are delusive. I regard this as a species of “activity,” or “inactivity,” call it what you will, that may well become the American people to let alone.

We must, it appears to me, choose between two alternatives—either back out, by abandoning our title to the territory, or meet the question at once in a manner that becomes the dignity of the nation. The former course is not to be thought of; the people of all parties will scout at the idea. What

then? We must take the other course; give the notice recommended by the Executive. But, we are told, this will lead to war. Will it do so? I do not know. I cannot, with certainty, predict. I do not believe it will. Why should this produce war? It will be but the exercise of a right reserved to both parties by the convention; and how can Great Britain take umbrage from this? Yet she may. I do not believe she will; but if otherwise, be it so; we cannot help it. The gentleman from Boston [Mr. WINTHROP] has told the committee "that a war growing out of this question will be an eternal disgrace to both nations." To one-half of this proposition, I agree. It will be an eternal disgrace to Great Britain to go to war on this account; to persist to that extremity in her unallowed attempts to rob us of our territory. Not so with us. We would be but defending our own soil—discharging the most sacred duty a government owes its citizens, by extending to them the protection of our laws and preserving the integrity of our territory. If war grow out of such a course on our part, I trust in God we shall hear the united response from our people—Let it come! I feel sure that such will be the voice of the great State I have the honor, in part, to represent. The gentleman from Alabama, [Mr. YANCEY,] and two or three from Virginia, have told us there is no disgrace in our letting things remain as they are. No disgrace in permitting Great Britain to occupy American soil—to exercise her sovereignty over it—to compel American citizens to submit to her tribunals! Will the gentlemen say so, if Great Britain occupies a part of Virginia? I presume not. I cannot yield my assent to this doctrine. With me it makes no difference whether Great Britain attempts to exercise her authority over American territory in the North, the South, or in the far-off regions of Oregon. I will be equally prompt to resist her in all directions. Our safety, as well as our honor, will not permit us to stop short of this. Will it be no disgrace to a people who, more than twenty years ago, proclaimed through their Executive "that they no longer regarded this continent as open for future European colonization?"—a people who are even now repeating this, and yet cannot and dare not take possession of territory undoubtedly their own, for fear of a war with England? If this is so, let us hide our diminished heads. Let us no longer, like braggarts, be talking about regulating the course of other nations in planting colonies, until we can protect, without the aid of Great Britain, American citizens upon American soil!

But, say gentlemen, "the notice will lead to war, and war is a dreadful thing." Where was the prospect of war? None could regret its occurrence more than myself; and sure I am, if it depends upon the people of this country alone, there will be no war. They desire no war. They claim no more than is their own. They demand only what belongs to them; and if, for advancing and persisting in a just claim, war should come upon them, it will be a war of aggression, and the responsibility will be upon the aggressor. We can stand in the face of the world, and proclaim ourselves innocent and blameless. Gentlemen have told the committee "it will be an almost endless war—the most bloody and momentous the world has ever seen; that it will

continue until either Great Britain or ourselves are entirely conquered; that England will never yield up Oregon until her lion has been driven from stronghold to stronghold; in short, that it will be a war of systems—a war wherein the monarchical will be arrayed against the democratic principle." Will it be such? Do gentlemen suppose that we at the North—whom I presume the gentleman from South Carolina [Mr. RUFLET] referred to, as "being dwellers under an October sun"—will ever think of undertaking a war to impose upon other nations a republican form of Government? I assure the gentleman we will not. We have never so learned our creed. We believe that democratic principles would wither and die in such an attempt. We would as soon think of propagating the principles of our holy religion by the sword and fagot! I believe that a struggle between those systems is inevitable; that it is already going on throughout the world; but in the contest our doctrines are not proclaimed by the thundering voice of the cannon. No! Such contest has no alliance with the military chieftain in his epaulettes and plumes. None of the pomp and noise of war is needed. The allies are widely different from all these. They are the humble schoolmaster, quietly performing his office in educating the world, aided by that mighty engine—the printing press! scattering, broadcast, knowledge and intelligence throughout the earth. These, and these alone, are the weapons used; and, I doubt not, they will prove victorious.

Here I wish to notice the caution given by the gentleman from Alabama [Mr. YANCEY] to our western friends to be careful of us northern men in this business: claiming that we would like to get Canada and the other British provinces north of us, and when we had obtained them, we would turn round and be for negotiating away and yielding up Oregon. Does the North wish to conquer Canada, sir? and how and when has she proposed to do it? True, the North can drive out the British troops, destroy their fortresses, and remove from them every vestige of British power. What more can she do? Nothing at all. This effected, she must withdraw, and leave the people of Canada perfectly free to choose a form of government for themselves. If they preferred a monarchical form of government, so be it—let them establish it. If they choose to return to a state of colonial dependence upon Great Britain, or enter into that relation with any other European Power, it would be their right so to do, and we could not complain. If they should desire a republican form of government, and seek admission into our confederacy, we should open wide our doors, and hail them as brethren. This is all we mean by taking Canada—simply removing every obstacle—every foreign impediment to the free action of her people. In case of war between us and Great Britain, I have no doubt we should speedily do this. Such are all the conquests we can ever make. We can never establish colonies or impose forms of government upon a conquered people. The genius of our institutions forbids it. We must, from the very nature of our Constitution and laws, have the free consent of the people with whom we are connected.

I have been much amused, as well as delighted, by the picture so well and so graphically drawn by the gentleman from Virginia, [Mr. BEDINGER,] of

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the course of the eagle at Harper's Ferry. Would that that gentleman, and his friends in this debate, would imitate the example of the eagle he had so impressively described. He represented that noble bird, when a dark and portentous cloud was advancing from the West, as dashing boldly into its thickest gloom; again and again attempting to penetrate and cut its way through it, but as finally sweeping around it and settling on the loftiest peak of the neighboring mountain; and then the cloud's passing over without a drop of rain having fallen from it. These gentlemen imagine they behold a portentous cloud arising out of this notice; but when they, in fancy, see its dark folds hanging like night over them and threatening to deluge the land, do they, like the eagle, dash into its thickest gloom? Not at all. They stop their flight and droop their wings before they get within twelve months' reach of the cloud! Why not, gentlemen, really imitate your eagle of the cloud? Give the notice, and then if you stop upon the mountain's peak, you will not have to tarry long before you will find the cloud passing over and no war-like drops shed.

Several gentlemen have protested against giving the notice, for the reason that it will fasten upon the country the paper system and its kindred abuses for a long series of years. No one can regard this as a greater calamity than myself; but I cannot bring my mind to believe such evils will follow. Do gentlemen mean to address this argument to their prominent ally on this question, the gentleman from Massachusetts, (Mr. WINTHROP?) I doubt whether they can make him believe it. If they succeed, I rather think he will become less hostile to the measure. Shall we give this notice? "Not yet," say the gentlemen. Why not? Because we are not ready. Many of the States, they tell us, are deeply involved in debt, and are, consequently, unable to sustain the burdens of a war, should it ensue. I listened eagerly to the enumeration of such States, to ascertain whether New York was comprehended in the list. I found, to my great satisfaction, that she was not. A new light broke in upon my mind. I have ever been among those opposed to the creation of these enormous debts by the States; I have been so for the reasons that the benefits conferred upon the people by the expenditure of the money obtained must ever be confined to a part only, while the burdens they imposed extend to all, and that there ever must be more or less of injustice in everything affected by them. When I view them in this light, and see how they cripple the resources and paity the arm of this nation—how they tend to render her unable to assert and maintain her just rights, they appear infinitely more odious. This Government must procure the sinews of war from the people of the States. It has no other resource; and if the States, by improvident legislation, have destroyed their credit, and rendered their people unable to contribute their quota to sustain this Government, it is powerless. The nation cannot maintain her rights, nor redress her wrongs, however flagrant. New York, although largely in debt, I am happy to say, is not in this dilemma. True, a few years ago she was on the verge of bankruptcy. Gratitude, eternal gratitude, I cannot but feel is due to the men who so nobly rescued her from this humiliating position; and honor to

her citizens who so cheerfully submitted to the burdens necessarily imposed, and so warmly supported those they charged with that tremendous and fearful duty. Yes, I am proud to say to-day, that the patriotic sons of New York are ready to meet every emergency, and to discharge every obligation she is under to the Union. Go on, sir, in the path of duty, and through weal or through wo, New York will be with you. I have perceived that most of those who have preceded me in this debate have, in case of war, placed their constituents in the front of the fight. With this I am content. Take the *front*, gentlemen, leave to New York the *rear*, and I assure you there will be no retreat while a British flag waves on this continent!

Why not give this notice now? We are told our coasts are defenceless—our navy inefficient—our army small, and, but a few days ago, a communication was read to us by the gentleman from Connecticut, (Mr. ROCKWELL,) coming from Stonington, informing us that they had a large number of whale ships out at sea, worth millions of dollars, and that some of them would not return in two or three years. When will they have a less number out? I would like to know. They further advise us that one steam frigate could burn their town and destroy it in two hours! Gracious Heavens! is this so? A town as large as that, possessed of millions of property, and yet unable to defend itself for two hours against one steam frigate! My first impulse was to say, let them burn; but when I reflected upon the enervating tendency of wealth and luxury, to the influence of which that people had, probably, long been subjected, I thought it better to send some of the more spirited men there to take care of them until their sailors returned, and then we should hear a different story from them.

The gentleman from Virginia [Mr. PENDLETON] told us that New York city would experience some of the first bitter fruits of the war policy—that she would be either laid in ashes or under contribution. I will inform that gentleman that he need give himself no uneasiness about New York. She can take care of herself; and if the enemy dared to attack her, they would very soon wish themselves aboard of their steam-ships, with a full head of steam, steering for the ocean. This talk about attacking New York reminds me of an incident that is said to have occurred on board a British ship during the late war of this country and Great Britain, between two American sailors, who had been impressed, and a British tar. The Briton first inquired of one, where he was from? Boston, was the answer. Oh, then, you will soon be released, said the Englishman; our fleet is shortly going to Boston. Then propounding the same question to the other, received for answer: New York. Ah, ha! exclaimed the British tar, you will have to ride it out, then; we are not going to New York. The Yorker says, you had better not; if you do, you will find old TOMPKINS there! Let them come now, if they choose, and instead of finding one daring man they will find *fifty thousand*.

What sort of preparation for war do gentlemen wish for? Will they wait for years, and expend large sums of money in organizing an army and building a navy, that, after all, ten chances to one, will never be wanted? I do not believe the people

will approve of this. All the preparation I desire is simply this—to have the people united; firmly convinced that they are clearly in the right, and satisfied that England was intent upon wresting from them, by force, territory indisputably theirs. This would be enough; and money would be furnished; arms, and men to use them, would be found as if by magic. I have full confidence in the people of this country. Let the emergency come, and they will prove themselves worthy of their revolutionary fathers. Will it come? There are many reasons that lead me to doubt it.

England, although possessing a large army and an immense navy, has many obstacles to encounter. Her enormous debt is like an incubus upon her prosperity. In a time of profound peace, she was compelled to impose taxes upon her people that were driving them to madness. Already has she reached the maximum she is able to extort from her toiling millions of subjects. No more can be forced out of her manufacturers and ill-paid laborers. Even now, her necessities have compelled her to impose an income tax. This imposition, which, until recently, has been her last resort in war, and always reluctantly resorted to, she is now obliged to adopt as her permanent policy. Under circumstances like these, will she be likely to engage in an unprovoked war with us? Her aristocracy control her policy, and they perfectly understand that every dollar expended in such a contest must be taken from their pockets. Her land tax for years has been so oppressive upon the owners of her soil, that they declare themselves unable to sustain it, unless protected by prohibitory duties upon the produce of foreign countries. An adherence to this policy is slowly but surely ruining her manufacturers. It has been adhered to until famine stares the operatives in the face. They surely have difficulties and embarrassments enough on hand nearer home, and more immediately affecting them, than any territorial claims upon her northwest coast.

The friends of this measure have been asked, whether they would negotiate after the notice had been given? As one of them, I would answer, most certainly. I believe that this course will lead to a renewal of negotiations between the two Governments. Peace is too valuable lightly to be cast away. The genius of the age in which we live is not warlike. The interests of both countries most strongly incline them to peace. The increase of knowledge, the extension of civilization, and, above all, the spreading of the genuine principles of Christianity, have that tendency. I hope that the future history of the world will contain less and less, each year, of the direful history of battles and the conflicts of man with man, until the remembrance of them will be banished from the earth. I trust that the day is not far distant when nations will learn that their true interests are best promoted by doing good to, instead of inflicting injuries upon, each other; when they will cease to

entertain jealousies about a "balance of power;" when governments will be relieved from every necessity for standing armies and navies to protect them from foreign aggression, and the people from the support of them.

Entertaining these hopes, I again repeat, that by all means I would negotiate if our adversary desired; by all means I would make an honorable, amicable settlement of this question, if possible. About the terms, I have nothing to say. The people have confided that matter to other hands. There let it remain. My confidence in the Executive is such that I entertain no fears for the honor or dignity or rights of the country while under his control. Let us do our duty, by passing the resolutions under consideration, leaving others untrammelled in the discharge of theirs.

APPENDIX.

Convention between the United States of America and Great Britain, signed at London, October 30, 1818.

ARTICLE 2. It is agreed that a line drawn from the most northwestern point of the Lake of the Woods, along the forty-ninth parallel of north latitude, or, if the said point shall not be in the forty-ninth parallel of north latitude, then that a line drawn from the said point due north or south, as the case may be, until the said line shall intersect the said parallel of north latitude, and from the point of such intersection due west along and with the said parallel, shall be the line of demarcation between the territories of the United States and those of his Britannic Majesty; and that the said line shall "in the northern boundary of the said territories of the United States, and the southern boundary of the territories of his Britannic Majesty, from the Lake of the Woods to the Stony mountains.

ART. 3. It is agreed that any country that may be claimed by either party on the northwest coast of America, westward of the Stony mountains, shall, together with its harbors, bays, and creeks, and the navigation of all rivers within the same, be free and open for the term of ten years from the date of the signature of the present convention, to the vessels, citizens, and subjects of the two Powers; it being well understood that this agreement is not to be construed to the prejudice of any claim which either of the two high contracting parties may have to any part of the said country, nor shall it be taken to affect the claims of any other Power or State to any part of the said country; the only object of the high contracting parties, in that respect, being to prevent disputes and differences among themselves.

Convention between the United States and Great Britain, signed at London, August 6, 1827.

ARTICLE 1. All the provisions of the third article of the convention concluded between the United States of America and his Majesty the King of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, on the 20th of October, 1818, shall be, and they are hereby, further indefinitely extended and continued in force, in the same manner as if all the provisions of the said article were herein specifically recited.

ART. 2. It shall be competent, however, to either of the contracting parties, in case either should think fit, at any time after the 20th October, 1828, on giving due notice of twelve months to the other contracting party, to annul and abrogate this convention; and it shall, in such case, be accordingly entirely annulled and abrogated, after the expiration of the said term of notice.

ART. 3. Nothing contained in this convention, or in the third article of the convention of the 20th October, 1818, hereby continued in force, shall be construed to impair, or in any manner affect, the claims which either of the contracting parties may have to any part of the country westward of the Stony or Rocky mountains.

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